

agree, I think, that none of the beauty has faded in the centuries that have passed since that description was given. And here, too, is a spot so sacred in history and tradition as to fill the heart of any Marylander who comes here with pride and elation.

The history of Maryland begins as a moving drama. Father White, who kept such a detailed and vivid record of the Calvert expedition, describes the first landing on this bluff:

“We took upon our shoulders a great cross, which we had hewn out of a tree, and advancing in order to the appointed place, with the assistance of the Governor, and his associates and the other Catholics, we erected a trophy to Christ the Savior, humbly reciting on our bended knees the litanies of the sacred cross with great emotion.”

Here, on March 27, 1634, began the actual settlement of the colony of Maryland. Here was written the first chapter of the glorious history of our State. Many events of great historical importance occurred here in St. Mary's City during the 60 years it was the capital of the colony. Today, I will recite just two of them that has a profound influence upon the history, not only of Maryland but of the entire United States.

One of these has to do with a most illustrious woman, Margaret Brent, who was the first American woman to demand the right to vote. She was one of the wealthiest landowners in the new colony, and hence was a substantial taxpayer. She was also the executrix of the Governor's will, and as such was virtually the treasurer of the colony. Boldly, she marched into the General Assembly meeting here in St. Mary's City and demanded not just one vote but two—one as a property owner and taxpayer and another as the executrix of the Governor's will. Her petition was denied, as no doubt she had foreseen, but she seized the occasion to make a pronouncement that many years after was to resound with thunderous import throughout the New World—that taxation without representation is tyranny. Moreover, nearly three centuries later, the people of this country with great wisdom honored the plea she made by granting the voting franchise to women.

The other occurrence to which I have referred has been acclaimed as one of the truly momentous events in mankind's struggle for freedom—the passage by the General Assembly, on April 2, 1649, of “An Act Concerning Religion.” This was one of the first legislative acts granting to all citizens the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. Religious freedom, as we know it in this country today, had to wait 140 years—until the adoption of the Bill of Rights in our Constitution—to become a part of our national heritage. But the